

## THE BLOOD ATONEMENT

By H. M. Egbert.

Hartridge knew that he would be chosen, though there had been thirty-seven applicants, by the head nurse's count, in answer to the hospital's brief advertisement. Thirty-six others! Hartridge had never realized before how low he had sunk, until he actual-



"Dr. Briggs Has Spoken to Me About You."

ly found himself sitting in a line with them in the reception room. There were men of all sorts and ages, but not of conditions. All were alike, collarless, unshaven, most of them smelling of beer or spirits; their clothes were tattered or threadbare, their hats shapeless, and they hugged them-

selves to keep out the bitter February cold. In contrast with these Hartridge felt that he was a gentleman again; yet this was his class, and he had been one of these for nearly a year.

The men rose awkwardly as the physician sauntered in, accompanied by the head nurse. He looked the men over as though they were animals. "You can go—we don't want you," he said to the first. "Nor you," he added, to the next. The third man looked more reputable, but when the doctor approached he detected the smell of spirits upon his breath. "Nor you—nor your kind," he continued angrily. So he went down the line, dismissing the majority at a glance. The man next to Hartridge was a tall, well set up young fellow. The physician hesitated, pulled down his lower lip, as though he had been a horse, and wiped his fingers on his handkerchief. "You get out of here!" he said. He looked at Hartridge and passed him over and continued his monologue until at last there remained only Hartridge and three others.

"Now, men," said the doctor, "it's between you four. You read the advertisement; we want a healthy man for blood transfusion, to save a woman's life. It won't be a trifle, either. It's going to mean more than you estimate, to lose a couple of quarts of blood. Don't think you'll earn your five hundred easily. You may die. Now then, does anyone want to go?"

There was a pause; then two